

2007-2008 Maine Educational Assessment  
Grade 8 Writing Prompt Information

The mode of writing assessed on the Grade 8 MEA is called Persuasive/Argumentative. This prompt aligns to the 1997 Maine Learning Results English Language Arts Standards G4 and F1.

For the purpose of this assessment, persuasive/argumentative writing is characterized as academic in nature. Students will read a prompt and will be asked to take a position on a topic. Evidence supporting and refuting the topic will be presented as part of the prompt. Students **MUST** use some text evidence but may also support their position with personal experience, observation, or other learning. The purpose of this prompt is to have students reveal their thinking about a topic and demonstrate their logic using text evidence.

The revised 2007 standards, to be assessed on the MEA in March 2009, separate persuasion and argument as two distinct modes of writing. The grade 8 prompt will align to the B3 standard in this document: argument/analysis. The purpose is not to create a call to action; students do not necessarily need to convince the reader to do something, think a certain way, or feel as they do. The intention remains to have the student write an analytical or informative essay and not to write a persuasive essay using standard persuasive devices.

Elements of a well-written “academic” argument include:

- Clear and consistent statement of position (or conclusion drawn from evidence)
- Logical organization
- Sufficient specific evidence to support position
- Correct use of standard English conventions